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U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)

Sri Lanka – Complex Emergency

Fact Sheet #1, Fiscal Year (FY) 2007

February 2, 2007

BACKGROUND AND KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- More than two decades of conflict between the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) separatist group have caused at least 65,000 deaths, according to humanitarian monitoring organizations. According to the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), renewed conflict has displaced more than 200,000 people, primarily in northern and eastern Sri Lanka, since April 2006. Approximately 260,000 individuals remain displaced from earlier stages of the conflict, in addition to those people who still lack permanent shelter as a result of the December 2004 tsunami. As of November 2006, 15,800 people had fled Sri Lanka to Tamil Nadu state in southern India.
- In October 2006, GOSL and LTTE representatives met in Geneva for peace talks; however, following the talks, the 2002 ceasefire broke down as both parties were unable to reach agreement on the reopening of the A9 access road, the key highway to the Jaffna peninsula in northeastern Sri Lanka. Conflict resumed in northern and eastern Sri Lanka following the collapse of the peace talks.
- On August 11, 2006, U.S. Chargé d’Affaires James R. Moore declared a disaster due to the increasing conflict and resulting internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Sri Lanka, and requested assistance from USAID/OFDA. On October 6, 2006, U.S. Ambassador Robert O. Blake re-declared a disaster and requested additional USAID/OFDA support. On January 17, 2007, the U.N. presented a Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP) for Sri Lanka, which requested \$66 million for relief and recovery programs in 2007.
- To date in FY 2007, USAID/OFDA has allocated more than \$1.2 million to support protection, logistics, and coordination and information management activities. The U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) has contributed more than \$1.6 million to the International Committee of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (ICRC) to fund emergency programs in Sri Lanka. State/PRM-funded programs facilitate the movements of conflict-affected individuals, restore family links, and provide medical aid, shelter, household items, and water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE		SOURCE
IDPs displaced by conflict since April 2006	204,300	UNHCR – January 2007
Total IDPs displaced by conflict	465,000	UNHCR – January 2007

FY 2007 HUMANITARIAN FUNDING PROVIDED TO DATE

USAID/OFDA Assistance to Sri Lanka \$1,249,922
State/PRM Assistance to Sri Lanka \$1,640,000
Total USAID and State Humanitarian Assistance to Sri Lanka \$2,889,922

CURRENT SITUATION

Humanitarian Access

- Since early 2006, military hostilities between the GOSL and the LTTE have escalated, particularly in northern and eastern Sri Lanka. The resulting insecurity has hindered humanitarian access and the delivery of relief supplies to displaced persons in these areas.
- In August 2006, the GOSL closed the A9 access road in Jaffna due to fighting. This closure has greatly reduced access to food, fuel, and medicine for an estimated 600,000 residents. UNHCR reports that movements by sea have been suspended following an attack on a commercial vessel carrying food supplies on January 21, 2007.
- In recent months, heavy fighting between the GOSL and the LTTE limited access to the eastern coastal town of Vaharai, in Batticaloa District. According to UNHCR, only one relief convoy has been able to deliver aid since October 2006.

Flood Response

- Monsoon rains in late December 2006 and early January 2007 caused extensive damage in the central and southern districts of Nuwara Eliya, Moneragala, Kandy, Badulla, Ampara, and Hambantota. The GOSL’s National Disaster Management Center reported that the rains affected up to 90,000 people and temporarily displaced 25,000 others during the first weeks of January. The Sri Lankan Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red

Crescent Societies (IFRC), U.N. agencies, and other international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) provided emergency assistance to affected communities.

Protection

- An estimated 25,000 civilians fled escalating fighting between government forces and the LTTE in the Vaharai coastal strip of Batticaloa District during the past two months, according to UNHCR. As of January 17, the GOSL and UNHCR had registered more than 60,000 IDPs in this area. UNHCR is working with other U.N. agencies, international NGOs, and the GOSL to provide humanitarian assistance to IDPs in eight camps in Batticaloa District.
- In FY 2007, USAID/OFDA has funded Save the Children/UK (SC/UK) to undertake protection activities to support an estimated 4,000 women and 12,000 children in the eastern coastal districts of Ampara, Batticaloa, and Trincomalee, and the Jaffna peninsula. SC/UK is implementing child protection and education activities, distributing emergency relief supplies, and assisting in the registration of children who are unaccompanied or separated from their families.
- USAID/OFDA has funded World Vision to implement protection activities for an estimated 5,500 conflict-affected children in communities and IDP camps in the northern and western districts of Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mannar, and Mullaitivu. In coordination with the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the GOSL, World Vision is establishing child-friendly spaces, distributing educational materials, and providing medical aid and psychosocial support.

Humanitarian Coordination and Information Management

- A USAID/OFDA regional advisor (RA) returned to Sri Lanka on January 31, following four visits in the previous eight months. In consultation with USAID/Sri Lanka, the RA will assess current conditions and determine whether additional USAID humanitarian assistance is needed.
- A USAID/OFDA geographic information systems officer, who accompanied the RA to Sri Lanka in October 2006, established an information management system to support humanitarian coordination in collaboration with USAID/Sri Lanka.
- In FY 2007, USAID/OFDA provided \$200,000 to support the coordination and information management activities of the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). OCHA's Humanitarian Information Center for Sri Lanka provides maps, a website, and other information management tools to organizations responding to the emergency.

Logistics

- USAID/OFDA is supporting U.N. World Food Program (WFP) efforts to acquire and consolidate humanitarian logistics capabilities to improve its response capacity in Sri Lanka. WFP plans to pre-position food and non-food relief supplies and increase storage and transport capacity.

USAID AND STATE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO SRI LANKA IN FY 2007

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE¹			
World Vision	Protection	Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mannar, Mullaitivu	\$399,955
SC/UK	Protection	Ampara, Batticaloa, Jaffna, Trincomalee	\$349,967
OCHA	Coordination and Information Management	Countrywide	\$200,000
WFP	Logistics	Countrywide	\$300,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA²			\$1,249,922
STATE/PRM ASSISTANCE³			
ICRC	Health, Shelter, Protection, Emergency Relief Supplies, and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	Countrywide	\$1,640,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM⁴			\$1,640,000
TOTAL USAID AND STATE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO SRI LANKA IN FY 2007			\$2,889,922

¹ USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of February 2, 2007.

² USAID/OFDA provided \$1.1 million to support health, protection, and water, sanitation, and hygiene activities for displaced persons in Sri Lanka through UNICEF and Mercy Corps in FY 2006.

³ State/PRM also provided nearly \$2.7 million to UNHCR to support programs that protect and assist refugees and IDPs in India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka in FY 2007.

⁴ State/PRM provided \$1.2 million to ICRC for emergency programs in Sri Lanka in FY 2006. In addition, State/PRM contributed \$12.6 million to ICRC for activities in South Asia, including Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, and \$4.5 million to UNHCR for programs in India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka in FY 2006.

PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. Information on organizations responding to the humanitarian situation in Sri Lanka can be found at www.reliefweb.int
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, warehouse space, etc.); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietary, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
 - USAID: www.usaid.gov – Keyword: Donations
 - The Center for International Disaster Information: www.cidi.org or (703) 276-1914
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at www.reliefweb.int